



Montana Gifted Program Planning Guide

August, 2008



Linda McCulloch, Superintendent

Montana Office of Public Instruction
PO Box 202501
Helena, Montana 59620-2501
www.opi.mt.gov

Montana Gifted Program Planning Guide Table of Contents

Foreword	2
Rationale.....	2
Component I:	
Student Identification According to a Written Philosophy	3
Component II:	
Curriculum Reflecting Student Needs.....	4
Component III:	
Support Services and Parental Involvement.....	8
Component IV:	
Teacher Preparation	11
Component V:	
Program Evaluation	12
Closing Thoughts	13

Appendixes

Appendix

I	Montana Board of Public Education Accreditation Standard, Subchapter 8 Educational Opportunity (ARM 10.55.804) Gifted and Talented
II	School Laws of Montana (Part 9 Gifted and Talented Children)
III	Sample Philosophy Statements
IV	Definitions of Gifted Options
V	Gifted Education Programming Criterion Components I-V (Minimum essential elements and recommended practices)
VI	Program Plan Table of Contents Template

Montana Gifted Program Planning Guide

Foreword

Montana Board of Public Education accreditation standard Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 10.55.804 (hereinafter referred to as "the standard") requires each district to have a comprehensive plan to identify and serve gifted (high ability/high potential) students. This publication is designed to be a guide to assist districts in developing and implementing their plan for appropriately serving these students. The format of the guide follows the standard's six components, and can serve as a template for a district plan.

The Office of Public Instruction acknowledges the contribution of Stephanie Smith to the content of the guide and to Kathleen Molloy and Michael Hall for editing. All reprinted material by Dr. Karen Rogers is reproduced by permission of Great Potential Press, www.giftedbooks.com.

Rationale

Services to gifted students must be consistent, planned, and embedded in their daily school experiences. This means that a "pull-together" component of the program may be in place, but it is not the entire program. Students are gifted all day every day and, although they need to be together some of the time, they must have appropriate and differentiated curriculum on a daily basis in the regular classroom.

The basis of education for gifted students, like all students, is in the regular classroom. About 60 percent of gifted students will have their needs met within that setting, as long as there is consistent differentiation. Approximately 30 to 35 percent of the gifted students will need some type of additional services, such as pull-together (sometimes referred to as pull-out) activities or program offerings, academic competitions, special projects, etc. Even with differentiation and additional classroom services, approximately five to ten percent will require some form of opportunity outside the regular classroom, such as grade skipping, subject acceleration, concurrent enrollment, etc.

Enrichment is not a gifted program. All students need enrichment activities. Further, educational services provided to high ability/high potential students must not be solely composed of after-school activities. Identified gifted students are entitled to receive high-quality, rigorous, and appropriate challenge as a part of their regular classroom experience.

The district team or committee writing the gifted plan would ideally include teachers and administrators from each pertinent level (elementary, middle school, and high school). The committee should also include a counselor from the middle and high school, a school board member, and a parent.

The plan must address all grade levels served by the district. Although most of the strategies work quite effectively at any level, some refinements will be unique to each. These will be addressed in this guide.

The standard (Appendix I) outlines six components of a gifted education plan for services for high-ability students. Appendix V describes the essential elements of the standard, along with minimum and exemplary practices for implementing it.

Component I: Student Identification According to a Written Philosophy

A. PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The district philosophy statement describes the district's definition of gifted/high-ability students. It defines:

who are the high-ability students,
what are their unique needs,
how these needs are different from other students, and
how these needs will be met.

The philosophy statement will guide districts in the design of a gifted plan. An example:

[Montana public school] has the responsibility to provide services that meet the needs of all students to develop their potential.

Highly capable students have special needs created by their high degree of sensitivity, wide range of interests, advanced verbal and academic skills, rapid rate of learning, and a greater capability for higher-level thinking. Intellectual, academic, and creative talents can paradoxically be a handicap in an educational situation designed to meet the needs of the majority of students.

[Montana public school] is committed to providing these students with an appropriate learning environment to allow a diversity of options in order to maximize their potential.

The extended studies program provides consistent, daily, and continual support and resources to teachers, students, and parents/guardians.

For more examples of philosophy statements, see Appendix III.

B. IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

Montana schools must use comprehensive and appropriate measures in identifying gifted and talented students at every level. Generally, five to ten percent of a school's population might be identified as gifted/high-ability/high potential. These are students who demonstrate learning and thinking characteristics that are noticeably different from, or more advanced than, their peers. The district must decide how it will define gifted/high-ability students and then use appropriate instruments to identify these students.

There is no “perfect” way to identify giftedness; however, there are some guiding principles:

Define the steps of the process. Most districts begin the process with some form of teacher or parent referral. Inform parents that their child has been referred for screening and possible placement in the district's program to provide advanced academic services, and request parents' written permission to complete the screening. Let parents know that the results of the screening will be reviewed by a committee, and that they will be informed of the results. Screen referred students using the instruments the district has chosen.

Assure that the process is fair, unbiased, and consistent. Any instrument* used should be as unbiased as possible. Low income and/or low language skills within student populations must not prevent students from being identified. Processes and instruments should be applied to all the students being screened. Avoid using some instruments for some students and alternative instruments for other students.

Use multiple criteria to identify giftedness. Identification and placement for students should not be determined by one particular instrument. Conversely, one score should not prevent a student from being identified. Having multiple criteria means using different types of screening instruments. High achievement scores are only one form of criteria. Ideally, schools will use IQ scores, achievement data, and data from referral instruments.

For further information refer to the Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Component I in Appendix V where the required and exemplary practices for program philosophy and student identification are detailed.

Component II: Curriculum Reflecting Student Needs

The curriculum component is the service delivery portion of the plan. Gifted students must receive ongoing, differentiated instruction that is planned and embedded in the core curriculum. Time spent with a gifted and talented specialist, while extremely valuable, cannot be the only accommodation for high-ability students. Students and parents must be assured that there will be a continuity of programming for students during their K-12 years regardless of changes in staff, level, or administrator.

Gifted students learn at a much faster pace than other students and should not be expected to wait for the others to catch up. They may spend from three to six years of their school lives learning nothing new. (Rogers 2002). These children may benefit greatly from subject acceleration. The key is to assure the most appropriate placement for the student. That can mean grade placement as well as placement within the curriculum.

Three basic components to the delivery system are instructional management, instructional delivery, and curriculum modification. Each component is outlined below. These components present a menu of options available to a school district as a means of accommodating high ability students. Choose options that can be successfully implemented. Have an action plan for options that require radical acceleration for the student as necessary.

A. INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT

The instructional management component refers to how children are grouped to receive curriculum. High ability students are capable of moving through, or bypassing, portions of the curriculum at a rate different from the other students. They may do this individually or in small groups. The table below outlines possible types of instructional management services for high ability students.

Individualization	Grouping by Ability or Achievement	Acceleration
Credit for prior learning	Full-time ability grouping (tracking)	Grade skipping
Individual educational (or learning) plan	Regrouping by achievement for subject instruction	Early entrance to school
Talent development	Partial day (or send-out) grouping	Single subject acceleration
One-on-one mentoring or tutoring	Within-class performance grouping	Grade telescoping
Independent study	Cooperative grouping with like-ability learners	Concurrent enrollment
Non-graded/continuous progress classes	Cross-graded classes	Advanced Placement/ International Baccalaureate
Multigrade classes		Early admission to college
Compacting		Credit by examination

From Re-Forming Gifted Education: How Parents and Teachers Can Match the Program to the Child, by Karen Rogers. Reproduced by permission of Great Potential Press, www.giftedbooks.com

B. INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

Instructional delivery refers to the strategies and techniques used to bring the curriculum to the student. Instruction delivery also includes *process modification*, (Maker 1983) which refers to changing the processes by which a student will learn, or changing the processes used by the teacher to help students learn. High ability students must move through the curriculum at a faster pace and can handle content that is deeper, more complex, and more abstract than the regular grade level provides. This requires pre-assessment, curriculum differentiation, and consistent on-going assessment.

Following are instructional delivery methods and their definitions.

Instructional Delivery Method	Definition
Accelerated pace	Students progress faster as the teacher speeds up rate of presentation of information in order to match the significantly faster learning rate of intellectually and academically gifted learners.
Competitions	Students participate in contests outside of school using the knowledge and skills they have learned.
Discovery learning	Students find information and answers for themselves through active, often hands-on inquiry-based or problem-based learning activities.
Discussion	Students reflect orally on learned information with whole class or small group of students. When questions include conceptualization/ generalization, this is particularly appropriate for gifted students.

Instructional Delivery Method	Definition
Drill and recitation	Students respond to teacher's one-right-answer questions on mastered materials in a whole class situation, an opportunity to repeat information for those who haven't mastered it yet.
Flexible project deadlines	Students negotiate for more or less time to complete a learning experience and its matching product or performance.
Flexible tasks	Students (or teachers) change the requirements and parameters of a required product or performance.
Group projects and group learning	Group of students work together on teacher-chosen or group-chosen topic, developing either a traditional or nontraditional product of the learning acquired; as a process modification, it requires that the tasks be designed so that bright students will perceive the group product as more valuable than how they think they could have done individually.
Higher order thinking	Students are required to use higher order thinking (application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, etc.) in their learning responses.
Independent study	Students research teacher-chosen or self-chosen topic on their own, developing either a traditional or nontraditional product to demonstrate the learning acquired.
Individual project	Students learn about teacher-chosen or self-chosen topic, which may or may not involve research on own, developing either a traditional or nontraditional product of the learning acquired.
Inquiry	Students respond to teacher-led questioning in order to learn new concepts or draw conclusions and generalizations about what has been learned.
Learning contracts	Students negotiate individually with teacher about what and how much will be learned and when product will be due; often connected with an independent study or individual project.
Lecture	Students listen and take notes as the teacher presents information to be learned to either whole class or small group of students.
New content	Students learn new knowledge rather than what is already learned.
One-on-one tutoring	Students are assigned a special instructor or other content expert to develop their expertise in a specific subject. Most effective when used to enhance learning with gifted children, not to remediate what is missing.
Open-endedness, creative thinking	Students are encouraged to brainstorm or think divergently in order to produce more than one idea, answer, or solution.
Peer tutoring	Students are paired with one or more other students to help other students who have not mastered a topic to learn it.
Personal goal-setting	Students identify their personal goals and learn how to prioritize their time and activities to reach those goals.
Problem-based learning	Students are provided with an unstructured problem/task and are expected to "discover" a method for solving/accomplishing it.
Programmed instruction	Students proceed at own pace through a set of self-instructional materials, answering the embedded test questions as they occur.
Proof and reasoning	Students are expected to support their arguments and conclusions with evidence or proof.
Simulations	Students role-play situations or scenarios in order to apply previous learning or find solutions to the problems or situation presented.
Teaching games	Students participate in a competitive or non-competitive (self or group) game to review previous learning (e.g., "Round the World") or to learn new information.

From Re-Forming Gifted Education: How Parents and Teachers Can Match the Program to the Child, by Karen Rogers. Reproduced by permission of Great Potential Press, www.giftedbooks.com

Although the aforementioned instructional delivery methods are all viable tactics to use with high ability students, some are more effective than others. Some gifted students do not appreciate, and actually resent, being peer tutors. This is especially true if they are called upon to teach the others on a regular basis. The key in instructional delivery is to remember that these students learn at a much faster pace and a deeper level. Higher-level thinking skills should be embedded in all they do.

C. CURRICULUM ADAPTATIONS

As management and delivery are modified for gifted/high-ability students, so must the curriculum be modified. This is usually done by modifying the content, process, and product for gifted learners. In planning lessons for gifted/ high-ability students, teachers identify exactly what it is that students need to *know, understand, and be able to do* when they have finished with the content.

The table below defines some content modification strategies and product modification strategies.

Content Modification Strategy	Definition	Product Modification Strategy	Definition
Abstraction	Going beyond surface information; symbolism, underlying meaning of content	Real world problems or situations	Providing learners with a problem or situation to solve or work on that is relevant to their own lives.
Complexity	Providing more difficult and intricately detailed content	Real audiences	Providing children with experts in a field the child is studying to evaluate child's work; presenting work to a live audience.
Variety	Connecting content and ideas across disciplines	Transformations	Encouraging nontraditional products and performance that require transforming what has been learned into some visual, dramatic, or other useful form.
Organization	Changing the sequence for how content is taught		
Study of people	Relating content to the people in the field, famous people, human situations and problems		
Method of inquiry	Relating content to how things work, methods that are used in field		

From Re-Forming Gifted Education: How Parents and Teachers Can Match the Program to the Child, by Karen Rogers. Reproduced by permission of Great Potential Press, www.giftedbooks.com

Along with the content and product modifications, high-ability students must have regular practice with adding (or substituting) higher-order thinking, open-endedness, group process, freedom of choice, proof and reasoning, pacing and flexibility. (Rogers 2002)

Gifted students must have access to content that is advanced, accelerated and that goes beyond the regular classroom curriculum. The content must be deeper, more complex, and more abstract.

The Montana content standards provide educators and parents with a set of expectations of what students should know and be able to do by the end of grade four, eight and upon graduation. These standards should be the basis for curricular modifications made to meet individual student needs. Beyond the grades four, eight and upon graduation levels, Essential Learning Expectations (ELEs) are being developed to specify, grade level-by-grade level, the specific essential learnings that students must meet in order to master the required content. The ELEs are a great tool to use in making curricular modifications for students. Grade level assessments, Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRT) as utilized in the

Montana Comprehensive Assessment System (MontCAS), and other assessments identify the content that students have mastered and thus indicate appropriate subsequent challenging content. The Montana content standards and ELEs are available on the Montana Office of Public Instruction website located at www.opi.mt.gov.

For further information refer to the Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Component II in Appendix V where the required and exemplary practices for Curriculum and Instruction are detailed.

A complete table of definitions of gifted education programming service options can be found in Appendix IV.

Component III: Support Services and Parental Involvement

The third component outlines a plan for supporting the gifted program, and the people involved in the program, in order to provide well-articulated curricular experiences for students. There must be continuity of programming for the child during their K-12 years regardless of changes in staff, level, or administrator.

Support services include the following six groups:

Administration/School Board

Involvement of the administration and school board is essential for program support (recognition that there is a need for a program), and commitment to meeting the needs of *every* student. Develop an atmosphere of expectation, asking “How are you meeting the needs of the gifted children in your classroom?” Administrative support includes providing staff, time, funding, training and materials.

Curriculum Specialists

There must be support to assist teachers with appropriate curriculum and appropriate instructional strategies for these students. A curriculum specialist can provide differentiated curricular and/or instructional support. As gifted learners get older, the academic gap between them and the average student becomes greater and more noticeable. It is, therefore, very difficult for teachers to continually plan for gifted learners within the regular classroom.

The curriculum specialist may also help with guidance in flexibility and modification of scope and sequence and assist with placement of the student within the curriculum at the appropriate level of challenge in the district curriculum (aligned to state content and performance standards). While this might mean off-level work, it is still *within* content and performance standards. There are advanced levels of performance built into every standard in every curriculum.

Curriculum specialists:

- advocate for flexibility within/across the curriculum
- assist in utilizing scope and sequence, content standards and performance indicators as well as the Essential Learning Expectations (ELEs)
- are included on district curriculum committees, and
- help teachers with content, process, product and pace.

Psychologists

Although psychologists are generally used for special education testing, there are occasions when they may be called upon to test some students during the identification process. A gifted and talented specialist or classroom teacher is qualified to administer some instruments for identification and assessment of strengths. Some testing instruments may only be administered by a school psychologist. The school psychologist may also be a resource for the gifted committee when looking at types of assessment for identification. They may assist in:

- helping with testing and interpretation,
- consulting with teachers and/or parents, and
- explaining test results.

Counselors

Gifted learners have affective needs unique to them. Counselors should be accessible to these students to assist in meeting their unique needs and providing social and emotional support. Counselors may conduct group discussions related to gifted concerns (for example, brown bag lunches, after-school activities, or focus groups). Some topics may include:

- Fairness,
- gifted girls,
- perfectionism,
- achievement,
- being oneself, and
- understanding giftedness.

Counselors:

- Consult with teachers and/or parents,
- Do some mentoring or one-to-one counseling with students,
- Attend and offer workshops on serving the social and emotional needs of the gifted (SENG),
- Assist students with curriculum advice and course placement:
 - Acceleration,
 - grade skipping,
 - testing out of a course,
 - transitioning from level to level,
 - concurrent enrollment, and
 - college planning, career guidance.

Teachers

Colleague to colleague: Teachers need to communicate with other teachers involved with the gifted learners such as peers in other districts, or teachers at other levels.

Teacher to specialist: The classroom teacher needs to have time to communicate with gifted and talented specialists, curriculum specialists, counselors, and/or psychologists - either within their district or from outside the district.

Teacher to others: This includes others with special training (e.g., musicians, artists, etc.), parents, counselors, and professionals in the community.

For further information refer to the Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Component II in Appendix V where the required and exemplary practices for Support Services are detailed.

Parents

Parents are involved in two ways: they offer support while needing to receive support. They will advocate for their child's appropriate placement, for appropriate curriculum, and for addressing social and emotional needs.

Parents are great classroom or project helpers and will assist with school committees and advocacies.

In addition to being supporters of the program, parents need the support of each other. Forming a parent group is a way for the district to help offer support to parents. Often parents feel very alone when dealing with the unique needs of their gifted child. Parent meetings must be focused and have purpose. Parents like to hear speakers address their range of concerns.

A good idea is to have a fall "Open House" for the gifted program along with the regular fall school function. Parents need to know how their children's unique needs are going to be met. They must be a part of any of the decisions made concerning curriculum or placement changes their child will encounter.

Parents nearly always want their gifted child to spend part of their time with other gifted learners. When this happens, the level of conversation changes, ideas flow, etc. These learners often do not feel comfortable in full-time regular classrooms in which they think and feel so differently from other children.

For further information refer to the Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Component III in Appendix V where the required and exemplary practices for Parental Involvement are detailed.

Component IV: Teacher Preparation

A. PLANNED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Training in best practice for gifted and talented becomes incorporated into the district professional development plan. A person working directly with a group of gifted students, as in a pull-together, should be a qualified person with a background in gifted education. In addition, all classroom teachers need training in gifted education. Training in strategies appropriate for high-ability/high-potential learners (i.e., instructional strategies, curriculum modification, etc.) will benefit all students in the classroom.

Professional development topics include the following three areas.

Program Development

- Conducting a needs assessment
- Writing a philosophy
- Designing an identification process
- Selecting delivery options
- Creating action plans

Identification: characteristics and needs

- Characteristics of gifted children
- Identification of gifted students
- Social and emotional needs of gifted students

Instructional Strategies: content, process, product, pace

- Compacting
- Pre-assessment strategies
- Higher-order thinking skills
- Brainstorming
- Problem solving
- Extended activities
- Modification of assignments
- Differentiation

B. TIMELINE

A timeline would prioritize staff development topics and create a short term and a long term plan for gifted staff development for teachers. The plan would include provisions for educating new teachers as they come into the district.

For further information refer to the Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Component I in Appendix V where the required and exemplary practices for program teacher preparation are detailed.

Component V: Program Evaluation

The evaluation method includes formative and summative evaluation criteria.

Formative Evaluation: Formative evaluation is assessment of the progress of the planned program and offerings. It helps to form the program by asking questions such as:

- How well are students in the program performing?
- Is the identification process identifying the students with needs that the program was designed to meet?
- How successfully does the curriculum address the needs of identified students?
- How does the program address student growth, both academic and affective?

In formative evaluation, a report will be completed and the necessary changes are made right away as a direct result of the ongoing assessment.

Summative Evaluation: Summative evaluation measures the outcome of the program after a specified amount of time. Consider conducting a formal summative evaluation every five to seven years. Summative evaluation is best accomplished by designating a committee consisting of teachers and administrators representing all relevant grade levels, a counselor, a board member, and a parent.

During summative program evaluation the committee asks questions such as:

- Did the program do what it was designed to do?
- Was the student identification process effective in identifying students with extraordinary needs and abilities?
- Are there components of the program that are missing or incomplete?
- How successful were the school's support services in meeting identified needs?
- Did professional development result in an increase in the staff knowledgeable about gifted education?
- Did the quality of programming for gifted students increase as a result of the professional development?
- What changes do we need to make?

The summative evaluation should be formal and produce a written document that is accessible to teachers, administrators, school board members, parents, and anyone interested in the program. Needed changes should be made and then evaluated in the next cycle.

For further information refer to the Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Component I in Appendix V where the required and exemplary practices for program evaluation are detailed.

Closing Thoughts

The state standard requires appropriate instructional services for gifted students at all levels. The program at the middle and high school levels may look different from the elementary.

Once students are identified at the elementary level, this designation will follow them throughout their school years. In middle and high school the main identification procedures will be to identify students new to the district, or identify specific “gifts” of students, e.g., math, English, foreign language, science, social studies, etc.

At the middle and high school levels, the role of the counselor and/or the gifted specialist is crucial to student success at those levels. Re-grouping students and extending periods of time for work is more difficult at those levels with short time periods. The counselor or specialist must make sure the identified students are in the right classes with teachers who have had training and who are willing to differentiate for their specific needs. That person would also periodically monitor the progress of the identified students.

Classroom teachers at the middle and high school levels must continue to differentiate for these high-ability students, provide appropriate challenges and curriculum content just as is expected at the elementary level. This can often be achieved by open-ended questions or assignments, deeper and more abstract assignments, and so forth. Once again, this differentiation must be planned, appropriate, challenging, and embedded in the regular lessons and class assignments.

APPENDIX I

MONTANA BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION ACCREDITATION STANDARDS SUBCHAPTER 8 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY ARM 10.55.804 GIFTED AND TALENTED

- (1) Schools shall provide educational services to gifted and talented students that are commensurate to their needs, and foster a positive self-image.
 - (2) Each school shall comply with all federal and state laws and regulations addressing gifted education.
 - (3) Each school shall provide structured support and assistance to teachers in identifying and meeting diverse student needs, and shall provide a framework* for considering a full range of alternatives for addressing student needs.
- (History: Sec. 20-2-114, MCA; IMP, Sec. 20-2-121, MCA; NEW, 1989 MAR p. 342, Eff. 7/1/89; AMD, 2000 MAR p. 3340, Eff. 12/8/00.)

*Refer to Montana School Accreditation Standards and Procedures Manual Glossary.

GLOSSARY REFERENCE: Framework for Gifted and Talented Education Services.

GIFTED AND TALENTED: schools shall provide educational services to students commensurate to their needs. It is recommended that such services shall be outlined in framework which includes:

- (a) Identification of talent areas and student selection criteria according to a written program philosophy
- (b) A curriculum which reflects student needs;
- (c) Teacher preparation;
- (d) Criteria for formative and summative evaluation;
- (e) Supportive services; and
- (f) Parent involvement.

10.55.805 SPECIAL EDUCATION (included for comparison purposes)

- (1) Each school shall comply with all federal and state laws and regulations addressing special education.
- (2) Each school shall provide structured support and assistance to regular education teachers in identifying and meeting diverse student needs, and shall provide a framework for considering a full range of alternatives for addressing student needs.
- (3) Students with disabilities shall be given opportunities to become confident, dignified, and self-sufficient members of society.
- (4) A student who has successfully completed the goals identified on an individualized education program for high school completion shall be awarded a diploma. (History: Sec. 20-2-114, MCA; IMP, Sec. 20-2-121, MCA; NEW, 1989 MAR p. 342, Eff. 7/1/91; AMD, 1994 MAR p. 166, Eff. 1/28/94; AMD, 2000 MAR p. 3340, Eff. 12/8/00.)

**MONTANA BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS –
SUB CHAPTER 8 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY
Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) - 10.55.804 Gifted And Talented Education**

ARM - 10.55.804	Minimum Requirements	Recommended Practices	Observable Characteristics
(1) Schools shall provide educational services to gifted and talented students that are commensurate to their needs, and foster a positive self-image.	Identified students receive modified curriculum services tailored to their individual areas of need (strengths) and at their level of challenge (need), delivered in an environment respectful of individual needs.	Curriculum differentiation via: curriculum modification of level, complexity and pace, compacting, subject area placement at level of challenge (need), and/or grade skipping.	<p>Student is placed in curriculum, appropriate to level of challenge (need), which is beyond the expected grade level content.</p> <p>The curriculum has been modified to higher level of challenge (i.e., advanced subject area content, advanced levels of abstraction in the content area, advanced level of skills applied to the content area, advanced grade level placement for the subject or overall).</p>
(2) Each school shall comply with all federal and state laws and regulations addressing gifted education.	<p>Currently no federal laws apply.</p> <p>Montana Constitution Article X Section 1 (1) establishes the “system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person”.</p> <p>Montana State Law 20-7-901-904 defines gifted and talented children and provides identification and program guidelines.</p>	Develop and implement framework for program services consistent with 20-7-901-904 and 10.55.804 which develops the full educational potential of students served.	Elements of 20-7-901-904 and 10.55.804 are reflected in the framework and resultant policies.

**MONTANA BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS –
SUBCHAPTER 8 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) - 10.55.804 Gifted And Talented Education

ARM - 10.55.804	Minimum Requirements	Recommended Practices	Observable Characteristics
<p>(3) Each school shall provide structured support and assistance to teachers in identifying and meeting diverse student needs, and shall provide a framework* for considering a full range of alternatives for addressing student needs.</p> <p>*Refer to Montana School Accreditation Standards and Procedures Manual Glossary</p>	<p>Structured support requires professional development, and the ongoing consulting services of a qualified individual.</p> <p>Framework includes: identification of talent areas and student selection criteria according to a written program philosophy, a curriculum which reflects student needs, teacher preparation, and criteria for formative and summative evaluation, supportive services; and parent involvement.</p>	<p>Assess the needs related to providing student educational services of teachers, parents and students via surveys or other data collection methods. Implement professional development and other services as needed.</p> <p>Develop and implement a program framework addressing the full range of alternatives available to address student needs.</p>	<p>Data collection has been completed and identified needs were addressed.</p> <p>Professional development training has been provided to address identified needs via in-house or external resources.</p> <p>Supportive services have been provided via in-house or external resources.</p>

**MONTANA BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS –
SUBCHAPTER 8 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) - 10.55.804 Gifted And Talented Education

***GLOSSARY REFERENCE: Framework for Gifted and Talented Education Services**

GIFTED AND TALENTED: schools shall provide educational services to students commensurate to their needs. It is recommended that such services shall be outlined in framework which includes:

- (a) Identification of talent areas and student selection criteria according to a written program philosophy;
- (b) A curriculum which reflects student needs;
- (c) Teacher preparation;
- (d) Criteria for formative and summative evaluation;
- (e) Supportive services; and
- (f) Parent involvement.

****20-7-901. Definitions. As used in this part the following definition applies:**

"Gifted and talented children" means children of outstanding abilities who are capable of high performance and require differentiated educational programs beyond those normally offered in public schools in order to fully achieve their potential contribution to self and society. The children so identified include those with demonstrated achievement or potential ability in a variety of worthwhile human endeavors.

APPENDIX II

SCHOOL LAWS OF MONTANA

Part 9

Gifted and Talented Children

20-7-901. Definitions. As used in this part the following definitions apply:

- (1) "Gifted and talented children"** means children of outstanding abilities who are capable of high performance and require differentiated educational programs beyond those normally offered in public schools in order to fully achieve their potential contribution to self and society. The children so identified include those with demonstrated achievement or potential ability in a variety of worthwhile human endeavors.
- (2) "Professionally qualified persons"** means teachers, administrators, school psychologists, counselors, curriculum specialists, artists, musicians, and others with special training who are qualified to appraise pupils' special competencies.

20-7-902. School district programs to identify and serve the gifted and talented child.

- (1) A school district may identify gifted and talented children and devise programs to serve them.**
- (2) In identifying gifted and talented children, the school district shall:**
 - (a) consult with professionally qualified persons and the parents of children being evaluated;**
 - (b) consider a child's demonstrated or potential gifts or talents; and**
 - (c) use comprehensive and appropriate assessment methods including objective measures and professional assessment measures.**

20-7-903. Programs to serve gifted and talented children-compliance with board policy-funding.

- (1) The conduct of programs to serve gifted and talented children must comply with the policies recommended by the superintendent of public instruction and adopted by the board of public education.**
- (2) Proposals approved by the superintendent of public instruction in accordance with policies of the board of public education must be funded by money appropriated to the superintendent for that purpose.**
- (3) A school district shall match funds provided by the superintendent for a gifted and talented children's program with equal funds from other sources. "In kind" contributions may not be used to constitute such a match. Funds must be administered by the school district as provided in 20-9-507.**
- (4) The superintendent of public instruction may deduct reasonable costs of administration from the funds appropriated for the purpose of this part.**

20-7-904. Review and recommendations of proposals.

- (1) The policies of the board of public education must assure that program proposals submitted by school districts to the superintendent of public instruction contain:**

 - (a) evidence that identification procedures are comprehensive and appropriate;**
 - (b) a program description including stated needs and measurable objectives designed to meet those needs;**
 - (c) evidence that the activities are appropriate and will serve to achieve the program objectives; and**
 - (d) a method to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.**
- (2) School districts may request assistance from the staff of the superintendent in formulating program proposals.**
- (3) The superintendent of public instruction shall supervise and coordinate the programs for gifted and talented children by:**

 - (a) recommending to the board of public education the adoption of those policies necessary to establish a planned and coordinated program; and**
 - (b) establishing a procedure for review and approval of program proposals.**

Appendix III

Sample Philosophy Statements

1. Adopted from California and Nebraska

Fundamental to the basic ideals of a democratic society is the belief in the intrinsic worth of each individual citizen. To ensure the maintenance and improvement of the quality of life in such a society, it is essential to provide educational opportunities for each individual to maximize his/her potential. Thus, society, by providing for the growth of the individual, will in turn reap the benefits. For the minority of children at the upper end of the mental ability continuum, the regular education program is inappropriate. The needs, interests, and readiness of these pupils combine to form a mismatch with programs which are relevant for their more average age-mates. They require special educational considerations to more fully realize their potential.

2. Aurora, Colorado

The Aurora Public Schools are dedicated to meeting the needs of every student. In a democratic society, which seeks to offer educational opportunities appropriate to each child's ability, it is necessary to provide for the unique needs of the gifted and talented (high-ability learner).

(The gifted and talented) are those pupils whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so outstanding that they require a variety of special provisions in addition to the usual curriculum to meet their educational needs.

The purpose of the AGATE program is to provide the academically gifted/talented student with extensions for learning which provide a variety of educational experiences beyond those normally provided. Enhancing the self as a learner and as a producer is of primary concern. Activities, opportunities, and programs are thus structured to assist the student in assessing the capabilities upon the unique abilities, talents, interests, and needs which represent him/her as a "self."

3. Pennsylvania

Appropriate gifted programs are based on a belief that excellent education for the gifted will result in excellence in our society. This premise is part of a foundation upon which these guidelines are built.

- The belief in equal opportunity of education for all, according to individual ability and need, so that each student may have his/her potential challenged to a high degree.
- The belief that this equal opportunity is necessary and good for both the individual and society.
- The belief in the development of differential programs and the flexibility in the implementation thereof to provide for individual differences in regard to intellectual, social, and emotional abilities.
- The belief that the student should be able to engage in educational experiences that both provide a firm foundation in knowledge accumulated to date and enable that existing knowledge to serve as a basis for creativity, innovation and invention.

These guidelines reflect Pennsylvania's continuing commitment to provide a free, appropriate, public education for the mentally gifted consistent with their individual needs and outstanding abilities.

APPENDIX IV

Definitions of Gifted Options

The following table outlines the definitions of gifted options to be used in the Gifted Education Plan. (Rogers, 2002)

Key: IM—Instructional Management; ID—Instructional Delivery; CM—Curriculum Modification; PM—Process Modification; PrM—Product Modification

Ability or Achievement Grouping: Children of high ability or with high achievement levels are put into a separate group for differentiating their instruction. Can be full or part-time, permanent or flexible sorting. IM
Abstract Content: Content that goes beyond surface detail and facts to underlying concepts, generalizations, and symbolism. CM
Accelerated Pace of Presentation: Substantial increase in tempo of content presentation and acquisition. ID/PM
Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate Courses: Provision of course with advanced or accelerated content at the secondary school level, affording student opportunity to “test out” of or be given credit for completion of college-level course work. IM
Cluster Grouping: Identify and place top 5-8 high ability students in the same grade level in one class with a teacher who likes them, is trained to work with them, and devotes proportional class time to differentiating for them. IM
Communication Skills Training: Training in how to express oneself appropriately for full understanding of intention and acceptance of other perspectives. CM
Compacted Curriculum/Compacting: Streamlining the regular curriculum to “buy time” for enrichment, accelerated content, and independent study. Usually involves pre-assessment or pretest of what the students have already mastered. IM
Complex Tasks: Providing multiple-step projects for advanced knowledge and skill acquisition. CM
Conceptual Discussions: High level discussions of themes, concepts, generalizations, issues, and problems, rather than review of facts, terms, details. ID
Concurrent Enrollment: Allowing students to attend classes in more than one building level during the same school year. IM
Cooperative Learning Groups: Providing grouped activities for the purpose of developing peer interaction skills and cooperation. May be like- or mixed-ability groups. IM
Creative Problem Solving Practice: Training and practice in various creative thinking skills, such as fluency, flexibility, elaboration, risk-taking, SCAMPER, synectics, morphologies, analogies, imagination.
Credit by Examination: Provision of testing programs whereby the student, after successful completion of a test, will be offered a specified number of course credits. The College Level Examinations Program (CLEP) is the program widely used at the university level. IM
Credit for Prior Learning: Allowing students to demonstrate mastery of previously learned material through some form of assessment; same as “testing out.” IM
Critical Skills Training: Training in critical thinking skills, such as cause and effect, sorting of relevant data, induction, deduction, generalization, etc. CM
Cross-Grade/Cross-Age Grouping: Grouping children by their achievement level in a subject area rather than by grade or age level. Currently known as multi-age classrooms. IM
Cultural Enrichment in the Arts: Providing knowledge and skills in art, music, theater, dance, creative writing, graphics, particularly the history, aesthetics, and criticism aspects of these art forms. CM
Dilemmas, Conflict Resolution Tasks: Providing hypothetical and real ethical dilemmas and conflicts in behavior/intent for discussion, solution, simulation exercises, etc. CM
Early Admission to College: Permitting a student to enter college as a full-time student without completion of a high school diploma. IM

Early Content Mastery: Giving students access to knowledge and concepts in a content area considerably before expected grade- or age-level expectations. CM
Early Entrance to School: Allowing selected gifted children showing readiness to perform schoolwork to enter kindergarten or first grade 1-2 years earlier than the usual beginning age. IM
Early Exposure to the Basics: Access to the basic knowledge and skills of the range of academic subject areas considerably before expected age or grade. CM
Flexible Project Deadlines: Occasional renegotiation of when projects or assignments will be due, especially when high quality work has already been shown. ID/PM
Flexible Tasks: Allowing students to structure their own projects and investigations according to their strengths and interests. ID/PrM
Grade-Skipping: Double promoting a student such that he/she bypasses one or more grade levels. IM
Grade Telescoping (“Rapid Progress”): Shortening the time of progressing through a school level, such as junior or senior high by one year, while still covering all curriculum. CM
Higher Order Thinking Skills: questioning in discussions or providing activities based on processing that requires analysis, synthesis, valuation, or other critical thinking skills. PM
Independent Study Projects: Structured projects agreed upon by student and supervising teacher that allow a student to individually investigate area of high interest or to advance knowledge. IM
Individual Educational/Learning Plans (IEP or ILP or EP): Provision of formal written plan for managing and delivering the curriculum for a child with extraordinary differences in ability or educational needs. IM
Individualized “Benchmark” Setting: Working with an individual student to set performance outcomes for the student’s next product or performance. IM
Intuitive Expression Practice: Providing tasks in which students put themselves “in the shoes of” another person, situation, object through guided imagery, role-playing, etc. PM
Learning Contracts: Student and teacher jointly develop a contract for accomplishment of learning outcomes(s); often involves a streamlining of regular class work. ID
Like-Ability Cooperative Learning: Organizing groups of learners in three- to four-member teams of like ability and adjusting the group task accordingly. IM
Magnet School: Provision of a separate school focused on a specific subject area or areas (arts, math, etc.) or on a specific group of students (academically gifted or mathematically talented) with students gifted in that area. IM
Mentoring: Establishment of one-to-one relationship between student and outside-of-school expert in a specific topic area or career. IM
Multi-Grade/Multi-Age Classes: Combining two or three grade levels into one classroom and placing the brightest children as the youngest children in the class. IM
Non-Graded Classes: Placing learners in a classroom without regard to age or grade and allowing them to work through the materials at a pace and level appropriate to their individual ability and motivational levels. IM
One-on-One Tutoring/Mentoring: Placing a gifted student with a personal instructor who will offer curriculum at the appropriate level and pace. IM
Open-Ended Assignments: Providing students with tasks and work that do not have single right answers or outcomes. The task may have timelines and a sequence of activities to be accomplished, but outcomes will vary for each student. PrM
Organizational Management Training: Training in how to break down projects and goals into manageable and sequential steps and to estimate the time needed to accomplish these steps. CM
Partial Day/Send-Out Grouping: Removal of gifted children from a regular classroom for a specified period of time each day or week to work with a trained specialist on differentiated curriculum. IM
Personal Goal Setting: Teaching students to identify personal goals and how to prioritize time and activities to reach those goals. ID/PM
Planning Techniques: Training students in “backwards planning,” task analysis, flowcharting, etc. to break down projects and goals into intermediate, manageable sequences of time-related steps. CM
Problem-Based Learning: Providing students with unstructured problems or situations for which they must discover the answers, solutions, concepts, or draw conclusions and generalizations. ID
Problem-Solving Skills Training: Providing students with problem-solving strategies matched to differing problem types. PM

Proof and Reasoning: Requiring students to cite their evidence to support ideas or concepts they generate. PM
“Real Audience” Feedback: Using out-of-school experts to evaluate student work in a specialized area of study. PrM
Real Life/“Real World” Learning Experiences: Provision of tasks, projects that relate to current issues and problems in society or student’s own world. PrM
Regrouping by Performance Level for Specific Subject Instruction: A form of grouping, usually sorted for once a year that delivers appropriately differentiated curriculum to students at a specific ability or achievement level. IM
School for the Gifted: Provision of a separate school with admission requirements that students be identified or “certified” as gifted. IM
School-within-a-School: Gifted students are placed in self-contained classes at every grade level in an otherwise heterogeneous school. IM
Self-Concept Development: Provision of activities, discussion for the development of self-awareness, self-confidence, and improvement of self-esteem. CM
Self-Direction Training: Training in autonomous learning skills, independent thinking, and personal goal setting. CM
Service Learning Projects: Provision of academic credit for student volunteer work on community and welfare projects. CM
Single-Subject Acceleration: Allowing students to move more quickly through the progression of skills and content mastery in one subject where great advancement or proficiency has been observed; other subjects may be at grade level. IM
Social Issues Discussions: Provision of current events, political, philosophical, and social issues for discussion. CM
Study of People: Relating a topic of study to the famous people and human issues within that field. CM
Subject Integration/“Thematic Approach”: Uniting two or more disciplines and their content through a conceptual theme, such as “origins” or “change” or friendship.” CM
Systematic Feedback: Consistent, regular evaluations of student’s products, performance, knowledge acquisition for both corrective and reinforcement purposes. PM
Talent/Ability Grouping: Grouping students of like ability or like interest on a regular basis during the school day for pursuit of advanced knowledge in a specific content area. IM
Talent Development: Provision of experiences for an individual student with demonstrated high performance or potential in a specific area either through individual work or with a group of students with like talent. IM
Talent Exhibition: Providing the venue in which a student may demonstrate individual talents (academic or artistic), such as concert, show competition, fair, etc. PrM
Talent Search Programs: Provision of highly challenging, accelerated learning experiences, usually on a college campus in a specific talent area (math, writing) for highly talented students. IM
Telescoping of Learning Time: Any technique that shortens the amount of time a student is provided to acquire content and skills, i.e., rapid progress, acceleration, compacting, tempo; can be subject specific or across a grade level. IM
Time Management Training: Training in how to make the best use of time available through prioritizing of academic and personal goals. CM
Tracking or Full-Time Ability Grouping: Sorting students, usually once a year, by ability level and then scheduling all of their academic (sometimes nonacademic) classes together. IM
Transformational Products: Requiring students to show how to use what they have learned by creating a “product” in a nontraditional, often visual medium. PrM
Visualization Techniques: Providing students with role-play scenarios or guided imagery that encourages them to create images in their minds. PM
Within-Class Ability/Performance Grouping: Sorting of students, topic-by-topic or subject-by-subject within one classroom for the provision of differentiated learning for each group. IM

From Re-Forming Gifted Education: How Parents and Teachers Can Match the Program to the Child, by Karen Rogers. Reproduced by permission of Great Potential Press, www.giftedbooks.com

APPENDIX V

Gifted Education Programming Criterion Components I-V (Minimum essential elements and recommended practices)

APPENDIX VI

Program Plan
Table of Contents Template

Gifted Education Plan
School District

Developed by January 20__
To be adopted by March 20__
To be implemented by August 20__

	Page
District Profile.....	
Philosophy Statement.....	
Identification Process.....	
Curriculum and Instruction	
Instructional Management	
Elementary	
Individualization	
Grouping	
Acceleration	
Instructional Management	
Secondary.....	
Individualization	
Grouping	
Acceleration	
Instructional Delivery	
Elementary	
Secondary.....	
Curriculum Adaptations.....	
Elementary	
Secondary.....	
Support Services	
Parent Involvement	
Professional Development Topics	
Timeline	
Program Evaluation	